

## Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-10 CIAE-00

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 EB-08 NRC-07 DODE-00 ERDA-07

SS-15 SP-02 FEA-01 PA-02 PRS-01 PM-05 SSO-00

NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 ERDE-00 /112 W

-----129983 221025Z /17

O 220908Z AUG 77 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WAHSDC IMMEDIATE 8506

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4246

LAGOS FOR MOOSE AND YOUNG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SF

SUBJECT: FONMIN BOTHA COMMENTS ON NUCLEAR ISSUE

REF: STATE 196580

1. FOLLOWING ITEM WAS CARRIED ON SABC NEWS THIS MORNING:

QUOTE THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MR. R.F. BOTHA HAS CONFIRMED IN AN INTERVIEW WITH SAPA THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS MADE INQUIRIES ABOUT THE TRUTH OF RUMORS SPREAD BY RUSSIA THROUGHOUT THE WORLD TO THE EFFECT THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS ON THE POINT OF TESTING A NUCLEAR WEAPON OR DEVICE. MR. BOTHA SYAS THAT THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN SOUTH AFRICA HAS BEEN TOLD THAT THE RUMORS ARE WHOLLY AND TOTALLY UNFOUNDED. HE SAYS THE MATTER WAS ALSO RAISED BY THE WEST GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER MR. GENSCHER DURING TALKS HE HAD WITH HIM IN FRANKFURT

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LAST WEEK. OTHER GOVERNMENTS HAVE ALSO APPROACHED SOUTH AFRICA ABOUT THE ALLEGATIONS. MR. BOTHA SAYS IT'S NO NEW STORY. THESE RUMORS HAVE BEEN SPREAD FOR YEARS. ALL THAT IS NEW IS THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE WHIPPING UP EMOTIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS ANTI-APARTHEID CONFERENCE IN LAGOS THIS WEEK. MR. BOTHA SAYS THERE IS ANOTHER REASON FOR THE RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA. HE WAS RECENTLY

TOLD BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF AN AMERICAN COUNTRY THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD ENGAGE IN THIS KIND OF CAMOUFLAGE IN ORDER TO HIDE THEIR OWN AGGRESSION IN AFRICA. APPARENTLY THE RUSSIANS HAD DECIDED TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR POSITION IN AFRICA BY TAKING THE LEAD AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA AT THE LAGOS CONFERENCE. IN THE INTERVIEW MR. BOTHA ALSO REFERRED TO THE CYNICISM OF THE RUSSIANS WHICH HE SAID WAS APPARENT BY THE FACT THAT BETTER THAN TWO MONTHS AGO THE SOVIET UNION HAD AGITATED STRONGLY TO HAVE SOUTH AFRICA REMOVED FROM THE CONTROLLING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY BECAUSE OF THE ALLEGED INADEQUACY OF HER TECHNOLOGY. NOW SOUTH AFRICA WAS ACCUSED OF HAVING ADVANCED SO MUCH THAT SHE STOOD ON THE POINT OF MANUFACTURING AN ATOM BOMB. UNQUOTE

2. DEPT PLEASE PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY.BOWDLER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECRETARY'S PARTY.

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** NUCLEAR TESTS  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
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**TAGS:** PARM, MNUC, SF, (BOTHA, PIK)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
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22 May 2009  
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